



News Release

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IRS E-FILE POSTS HIGH MARKS IN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

WASHINGTON – A government-wide survey released today indicated the Internal Revenue Service has significantly improved customer satisfaction among individual taxpayers, especially among those who file their returns electronically.

The IRS posted an 11 percent increase in satisfaction among all individual tax filers since 2000 and a 22 percent increase since 1999. It was the largest favorable gain of the 30 federal agencies surveyed by the American Customer Satisfaction Index.

One of the important reasons for the increase was the very high satisfaction rate among electronic filers. The 2001 ACSI placed the satisfaction rate for electronic filers at 77, 2 points higher than the previous year and nearly 7 points higher than the national score for private sector services. It was the third year in a row that taxpayers using IRS e-file expressed increased satisfaction.

"This is great news. We realize we have more work to do, but the survey is just one more indication that the IRS reorganization and its emphasis on customer service are paying off," said Charles O. Rossotti, IRS commissioner. "The satisfaction with IRS e-file won't surprise any taxpayer who has used it. When they try it, they like it. It is fast, accurate and dependable."

The IRS also continued an upward trend among people who file paper returns, a segment the ACSI termed "one of its toughest-to-please customer groups." There was a 4-point increase in customer satisfaction among paper filers for a score of 52.

For the 2001 filing season, there were 130.6 million individual tax returns. Nearly 40.2 million returns were filed electronically, a 13 percent increase over the 2000 filing season. The ACSI found that 78 percent of the people who filed electronically were so satisfied with the service that they would do it again.

Taxpayers have found that electronic filing has many advantages:

- It has a 99 percent accuracy rate, which reduces the chances of getting an error notice from the IRS.
- It is the fastest way to get refunds, in as few as 10 days with Direct Deposit.
- Taxpayers can create their own Personal Identification Number as an electronic signature.
- It provides privacy and security.
- Taxpayers receive an acknowledgement of receipt within 48 hours.

The ACSI survey for the first time also expanded its questionnaire to include customer satisfaction levels for other IRS Operating Divisions. The index provides a benchmark for customer satisfaction levels with Small Business form 1120 filers (66), Mid-size Business form 1120 filers (55), Tax Exempt Organizations (60) and Employee Plans (48).

Since 1994, the American Customer Satisfaction Index has been a national indicator of customer evaluations of the quality of goods and services in the private and government sectors. The 30 selected federal agencies serve 90 percent of federal government customers.

The ACSI is one of several national surveys conducted in recent months that found Americans have a more positive view of the IRS.

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